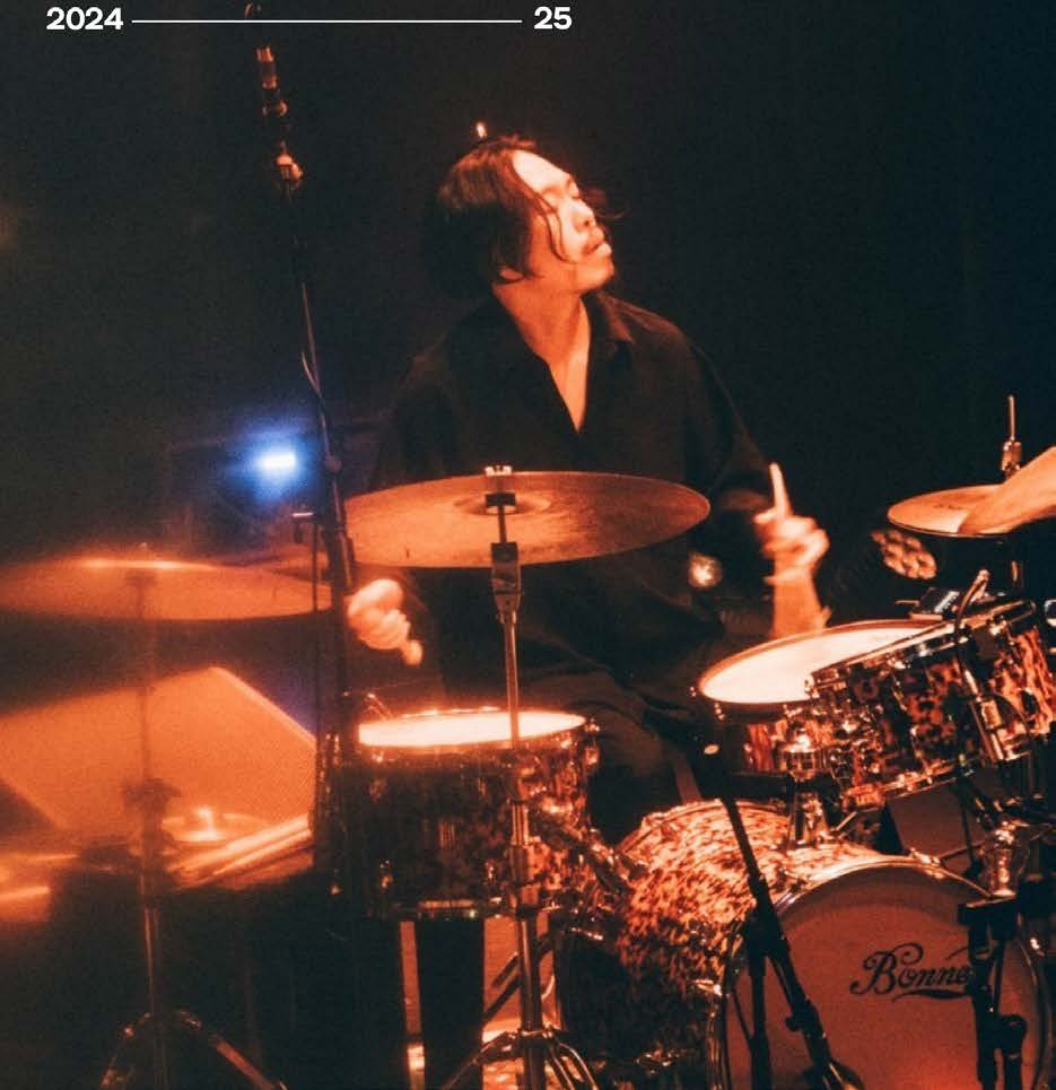


# PERFORMING ARTS

2024

25





Japan Society presents

# Contemporary Dance Festival: Japan + East Asia

Friday, January 10 at 7:30 pm

— Followed by an opening night reception

Saturday, January 11 at 7:30 pm

— Followed by an artist Q&A

*Contemporary Dance Festival: Japan + East Asia* is supported by Arts Council Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture), the Taipei Cultural Center in New York, and The Harkness Foundation for Dance. The program is also assisted by Korea Dance Abroad. Support for the international travel of Co. Ruri Mito for the *Contemporary Dance Festival: Japan + East Asia* program is provided by The Japan Foundation.



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### 2024—2025 Performing Arts Season Support

The season is made possible by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.



Additional, major support is generously provided by Doug and Teresa Peterson, Howard Gilman Foundation, and Jun Makihara and Megumi Oka. Endowment support is provided by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Endowment Fund, John and Miyoko Davey Foundation, and a leadership gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.



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Japan Society programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.



## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Happy New Year! We are delighted to offer this long-lived biannual program today in a complete format for the first time since 2019. Due to the pandemic, we had to reschedule our previous *Contemporary Dance Festival*, originally slated for January 2021, for the following year. However, the pandemic continued to ravage our community well into the year after. While our Korean and Taiwanese companies courageously arrived in New York to perform for the 2022 Festival (after much discussion around Omicron's sudden surge at the time), the Japan team had to quickly pivot to a presentation from Japan via 4K video for a COVID-related reason.

Indeed, this year's festival feels like a return to form for many reasons—after a several-year hiatus, I was finally able to return to Taiwan and South Korea two years ago for the purposes of curating this program. This *Festival* focuses on introducing new voices in contemporary dance from the other side of the planet to New York audiences. The featured choreographers are more than emerging artists in each of their own countries; they are mature enough to be seen by international audiences but have not yet entered the international touring circuit. Therefore, in order to carefully select this program, I cannot only depend on video; I have always traveled to those countries (and Japan, of course) for research. Visiting several companies' studio showings, I converse with each choreographer in person and listen to their criteria on aesthetics and what they are aiming for, etc., That is a very important process.

I hope that the introduction of their work here tonight in New York City will assist in international career-building for these artists and dancers. You, as a part of the audience, are also participating in this crucial process, as your reaction means a great deal to their steps forward.



Yoko Shioya  
*Artistic Director*

# Contemporary Dance Festival: Japan + East Asia

## PRE-SHOW PERFORMANCE

### *Matou* (Japan) | NEW YORK PREMIERE

Choreographer & Dancer: Ruri Mito  
Music: Yuta Kumachi  
Lighting Design: Akiyo Kushida  
Costume Design: Tomoko Inamura  
Production Manager: Yuko Takizawa, Koichi Kido

## PROGRAM

### *Trivial Perfection* (Korea) | NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

Choreographer: Daeho Lee  
Dancers: C.SENSE (Daeho Lee, Junghwi Park, Jisoo Ryu, Taejun Yoon)  
Composer, Sound Design, Live Music: Hyunsoo Kim  
Producer: Sin Ae Park (Korea Dance Abroad)

### *... and, or...* (Taiwan) | NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

Choreographer: I-Ling Liu  
Dancers: Jyun-Yi Lin, Wei-Ting Hung  
Lighting Design & Stage Manager: Yan-Yi Lo  
Costume Design: Yu-Teh Yang  
Rehearsal Assistant: Ai-Hsuan Chou  
Touring Manager: Wen Huang

## INTERMISSION

### *Where we were born* (Japan) | NEW YORK PREMIERE

Choreographer: Ruri Mito  
Dancers: Co. Ruri Mito (Lena Hashimoto, Fuko Ikegami, Sae Kodama, Risa Makino, Miyu Motegi, Miki Sasaki, Mariko Shibata, Maho Takahashi)  
Textile Motif: Sachiko Kamei  
Music: Chie Nakajima  
Lighting Design: Akiyo Kushida  
Costume Design: Tomoko Inamura  
Production Manager: Yuko Takizawa, Koichi Kido

*Performance runtime is approximately 90 minutes including intermission.*

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

### ***Matou***

***Matou*** is a solo dance piece choreographed by (and for) **Ruri Mito**. In describing the piece, Mito wrote, “*Matou* is a Japanese word. Its meaning is ‘to wear, put on, tangle, roll up’ but it is also often used in a figurative way. I ‘wear’ my body, and yet I will never be able to see the entirety of my body. The outer layer of my body is made of tissues that are continually renewing and replacing themselves, much as snakes shed their skin.” This piece explores the body as a mysterious, haunted vessel, impossible to comprehend or observe in its entirety. This evocative solo has traveled to festivals and competitions around the world, winning first prize in the international Solo Dance Contest at the Gdańsk Dance Festival (Poland) in 2017.

### ***Trivial Perfection***

“*Trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle.*” — Michelangelo

***Trivial Perfection*** uses the art technique of the “mosaic,” where small fragments combine to form a unified shape, and expresses this idea through body movements. Like a mosaic made from seemingly insignificant pieces, this work builds perfection through subtle and intricate movements that accumulate into something extraordinary. This work focuses on the “line,” one of the fundamental elements of body movement. Starting with simple straight and curved lines, the work explores complex three-dimensional forms like spirals found in the human body. These lines are repeatedly created, disappear and reappear, creating harmony through accumulated movements. Through meticulous research and experimentation, *Trivial Perfection*, performed by **Daeho Lee** and the dancers of the emerging South Korea-based male dance group **C.SENSE**, reveals how fragments of small movements come together to create perfection, transforming the trivial into something profound.

### ***...and, or...***

***...and, or...*** is a 25-minute duet on the subject of “decision making.” Taiwanese Choreographer **I-Ling Liu** explores the conditions and choices for establishing relationships while searching for the difference between pushing the boundary and overstepping it. The choreography develops intricate and sharp sequences of movements, posing an extreme challenge to the chemistry between the two dancers—who are sometimes cautious and delicate, sometimes humorous and playful, sometimes tense and on edge, and other times sulky and at odds. The music-free performance draws audiences in more intently to sense the dancers’ bodies, breathing and center of gravity, and brings them back to the authentic dance itself. This work won the Jury Prize at the Yokohama Dance Collection Competition I in 2022.

### ***Where we were born***

In ***Where we were born***, **Ruri Mito** scrutinizes and explores the body as the primal, defining element of human existence. Performed by the eight dancers of **Co. Ruri Mito**, the group delicately and intricately interweave together and unravel in complex, twisting shapes to explore the origins of life, presenting an intense and highly skilled work that showcases many bodies moving as one. For her choreography of ***Where we were born***, Mito received the Agency for Cultural Affairs (ACA) National Arts Festival New Artist Award in 2020.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### FROM SOUTH KOREA

**C.SENSE** (company) is an independent art company founded in 2021 by **Daeho Lee** and **Junghwi Park**, who are actively engaged in contemporary dance both domestically and internationally. The name C.SENSE combines “crude” and “sense,” representing an instinctive and unrefined sense. The group focuses on instinct and identity, exploring diverse artistic expressions beyond the limits of a single genre through its unique body language. C.SENSE, comprised of four exceptional emerging male dancers from South Korea, aims to capture the essence of physicality, where the spirit and soul converge, building an expressive vocabulary that resonates with the audience through movements originating from the body.

**Daeho Lee** (choreographer, dancer) joined Tatmaroo Dance Company as a company member after graduating from Sejong University of the Arts. He then worked with cie. toula limnaios in Berlin, Germany from 2016 to 2018. After returning to Korea in 2018, he worked with various Korean choreographers including Janghyun Ryu, Hyoseung Ye and Jinyeop Cha, and was featured in multiple ARKO (Arts Council Korea) Selection, National Theater Company of Korea, and Korea National Contemporary Dance Company productions. He appeared in the Hermes VIP launch show in 2023. Lee currently leads the creative group C.SENSE, where he focuses on choreography and dance films. His notable works include *The Rare Things*, *Paradise*, *Entrance* and *Wish*.

**Junhwi Park** (dancer) was born in Ulsan, South Korea, and is currently based in Berlin as a freelance dancer. He began his career specializing in street dance styles such as popping, locking and hip-hop. He later studied the Horton technique at Sejong University Graduate School of Arts, expanding into contemporary dance. He has danced for companies including the Tatmaroo Dance Company, the Korea

National Contemporary Dance Company, the National Theater Company of Korea and Compagnia Zappala Danza (Italy).

**Jisoo Ryu** (dancer) started his dance journey with b-boying/ breakdancing before transitioning to modern dance. He graduated from Han-sung University and is currently a member of Melancholy Dance Company while also working as a freelance dancer. Ryu has received awards from several prestigious competitions, including the Berlin TANZOLYMP, Dong-A Dance Competition and the Korea International Contemporary Dance Competition.

**Taejun Yoon** (dancer), born in Suwon, South Korea, is a freelance dancer, choreographer and educator based in Seoul. He began ballet at age 12 and transitioned to modern dance at 17. He graduated from Korea National University of Arts in 2019 with a B.A. in Contemporary Dance and Choreography. Yoon's achievements include the Excellence Award at the Daejeon New Dance Festival (2017) and being a finalist at the Berlin TANZOLYMP (2013). He is currently a project dancer with the Korea National Contemporary Dance Company and actively contributes as both a performer and choreographer. His notable works include *How Matter Comes to Matter*.

**Hyunsoo Kim** (composer, sound design) began his career as a bass guitarist before expanding into music composition and sound design for performances and exhibitions of dance, theater, visual art and more. Known for his versatility, Kim skillfully incorporates various music genres tailored to each project. He often performs live, blending his compositions seamlessly into the accompanying work.

**Sin Ae Park** (producer) is an international dance producer and curator. She is the founder of Korea Dance Abroad (KDA), established in 2014, and has been producing and programming numerous international dance programs that connect Korean artists to the global stage. Park currently serves as the artistic director of Monotanz Seoul, an international solo dance festival hosted by KDA, and as the curator of the S.O.U.M (Spectacle of Unlimited Movements) Festival held in Paris. She is also the producer of the Seoul International Choreography Festival (SICF) and has been appointed as the dance consultant for PAMS (Performing Arts Market in Seoul) 2024. Through her extensive collaborations with dance festivals and arts organizations worldwide, Park has played a significant role in fostering global networks for Korean dance artists, facilitating co-productions, international tours, and workshops.

**Korea Dance Abroad (KDA)** is a nonprofit organization founded by **Sin Ae Park** in 2014, dedicated to supporting Korean dance artists and introducing them to international audiences. KDA showcases unique and outstanding works of Korean dance globally, promoting international collaboration and cultural exchange. By partnering with dance festivals and arts organizations worldwide, KDA provides opportunities for Korea dance

artists to engage in co-productions, tours, and workshops, fostering their growth and visibility on the global stage.

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## FROM TAIWAN

**I-Ling Liu** (choreographer) is a contemporary dance artist from Taiwan. Liu was a member of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company (USA) for 11 years, until moving back to Taiwan in the late 2010s. In 2017, her work *GENG* was nominated for the Taishin Arts Award (Taiwan). Since 2019, she has been collaborating with the Taiwanese filmmaker Hui-yu Su as the choreographer/ performer/ movement director in several productions, including for the internationally touring work *The White Waters*. Since 2020, she has also participated in multiple productions of renowned artist Ming-wei Lee's work *Our Labyrinth*, performing at institutions such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Tate Modern. In 2021, Liu was commissioned by Chen Wu-Kang to perform the solo *14* as part of the da:ns festival (Esplanade Singapore; now the da:ns focus). In the same year, she received the support of the Cloud Gate Art Makers Project and again showcased a solo work, *Normal Life*, at the da:ns festival / da:ns focus in 2022. In 2022, Liu also performed *Still(Life) in Taipei* by Xavier Le Roy & Scarlet Yu; participated in the Taiwan version of Australian choreographer Stephanie Lake's work *Colossus* as rehearsal director; and won the Jury Prize at the Yokohama Dance Collection Competition (Japan) for her duet *...and, or...* In 2023, Liu was commissioned to create an ensemble work, entitled *Game On*, for the Taoyuan Iron Rose Festival (Taiwan), and was also invited to the Camping Asia dance project, organized in Taiwan by the Taipei Performing Arts Center and Paris' Centre National de la Danse. She also made a guest appearance in the award-winning song *The Landlord Upstairs* as a soloist in the Taiwanese OG rapper MC HotDog's concert *Disgusted Artist*. In 2024, *Turn Out*, Liu's first evening-length solo, was premiered with the support of Taiwan's National Theater & Concert Hall (NTCH), receiving widespread acclaim and praise. She is currently a part-time Assistant Professor at the Taipei University of the Arts.

**Jyun-Yi Lin** (dancer) performed in *The Wind Rises*, a major repertoire piece of the Taipei-based company WCdance, and was invited to present this work at the 2020 World Dance Alliance Asia-Pacific/TDRS and AGM International Dance Conference. Lin has collaborated multiple times with Leigh Warren, a trailblazing figure in contemporary dance in Australia, assisting with rehearsals, participating in choreographic reconstruction, and performing in dance productions. He has been involved in Lei Dance Theater's annual productions on three occasions, touring throughout Taiwan and performing at the Festival d'Avignon in France. Lin

co-created and performed in the documentary film *YEH Shih-tao, A Taiwan Man*, directed by Hui-Lin Hsu. He also took part in *Salute*, a biographical film centered around dancer Fang-Yi Hsu and directed by Hung-I Yao. His dance video, *No Man Is an Island*, choreographed by Ching-En Tseng and with video design by Yao-Jhen Yang, has been showcased on several major dance video platforms.

**Wei-Ting Hung** (dancer) graduated from the Department of Dance at Tainan University of Technology and is currently a freelance artist. Her theater performance repertoire includes works *The Story Behind the Wall* in 2022 and *The Wall and Lost Connection* in 2023, all with SEED Dance Company. She was a dancer in singer Vivian Hsu's music video *VIVILAND* and was part of the performance team for the 2019 Mulan Lunar New Year Celebration at Disney California Adventure Park. She received an Excellent Award for her piece *Isolate* in the 2022 National Student Dance Competition.

**Yu-Teh Yang** (costume designer) graduated from the Institute of Fashion and Communications Design at Shih Chien University. Her recent design projects include *Formless Erosion* and *See Yo* by Hung Dance, I-Han Cheng's solo dance productions *No. Me* and *Out of Elegant* in collaboration with Hung Dance, *The Memorandum of Disintegration* by Ethan Chen Production House, the children's dance theater work *A Sea of Smiling LT Ducks* by Hong Kong Dance Company, costume reconstruction and design for the mechanical installation of *Under the Horizon* by Huang Yi Studio, Hung Tung's *Fantasy* and *Kaxabu! A language no longer spoken?* (2018 George Town Festival) by Thunar Circus, a reproduction of *Isle of Dreams* (2018) and *The Drought Goddess* (2008) by La Cie MaxMind, *As You Like It* and *Prankster Chiu Wang-She* by Golden Bough Theatre, *Hell! My Damien*, *The Night Side of Life* and *A Doll's House* by EX-Theatre Asia, *Ashes of Snow* by Puppet & Its Double Theater and *The Wind Rises* and *Long River* by WCdance.

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## FROM JAPAN

**Co. Ruri Mito** (company) was launched by Ruri Mito in 2017. In 2019, the company won the Special Jury Prize at the Spiral Independent Creators Festival in Tokyo. The company had its first tour in 2019, and recently toured Europe in March 2023, travelling to Paris, Bucharest and Prague. Works produced by the company include, by year: *The Lake* (2017), *Sumika* (2018), *MeMe* (2019), *Where we were born* (2020), *Hedda Gabler* (2021 to 2022), *NOBODY IS HERE* (2024) and the three-year project *TOUCH* (2021 to 2024).

**Ruri Mito** (choreographer, dancer) started studying dance at the age of five at The

Modern Ballet Institute, Tokyo. She graduated from the Japan Women's College of Physical Education with a BA from the Department of Movement Science Dance Studies. Mito was a member of the dance company Leni-Basso from 2004 to 2010. Following this, she became an international freelance performer and has since been actively performing all over the world and received many prizes for her work. She has worked with internationally known choreographers including Wim Vandekeybus, Sasha Waltz and Damien Jalet. In 2017, she received the Tatsumi Hijikata Memorial Award, and in 2020, she received the Newcomer Award from the Japanese government's Agency of Cultural Affairs for her group choreography. She was a Fellow of the Saison Foundation from 2018 to 2024. Recently, she has been creating works that explore the layered resonances of the body, memory and time, making the unseen visible and pursuing expressions that transcend the physical and verbal.

**Lena Hashimoto** (dancer) expanded her interests to dance and yoga while studying fine arts in college and eventually studied contemporary dance and bodywork from various teachers in Japan and abroad. In 2014, Hashimoto participated as a dancer in Billy Cowie's residency and performance of *Under Flat Sky*. In 2016, she participated in the New Dance for Asia (NDA) International Festival (Seoul) and competed in the Solo and Duo Competition, winning the Jury Award for her solo performance. Hashimoto began assisting Ruri Mito in 2016, and has participated in Mito's dance company, Co. Ruri Mito, since its foundation. She has performed in *The Lake* (2017), *Sumika* (2018), *Where we were born* (Morioka performance in 2021), and Co. Ruri Mito's European Tour (2023), among others.

**Fuko Ikegami** (dancer) studied dance at the age of three under Miho Hirai. She graduated from the Japan Women's College of Physical Education with a concentration in dance. While in college, Ikegami discovered contemporary dance and started training under Takiko Iwabuchi. After performing at the closing ceremony of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, she participated in several videos and performances as part of Shintaro Hirahara's dance unit De/Co. Currently, she performs in Hiroaki Kumagai's works and provides choreography support for Kumagai. Ikegami has co-directed activities to expand dance outside of theaters under the project Tokoro since 2024. Ikegami also busies herself creating her own work, and won the Architanz Artist Support Award at the Yokohama Dance Collection 2022 Competition I and the Jury Award at the SAI Dance Festival.

**Sae Kodama** (dancer) recently performed in Co. Ruri Mito's 2024 performance, *TOUCH-#2*. Her other credits include the musical *Peter Pan* produced by HoriPro (2024), Kenshi Yonezu's Tour *Kuusou* (2023), MISIA's *THE GREAT HOPE 25th TOUR* (2023), the opera *Don Giovanni* produced by Hyogo Performing Arts Center (Artistic Director, Yutaka Sado) (2023), the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony

(2021), Nissay Theatre's *Into The Woods* (2022), *CHAIN OF INFINITY* (Artistic Director: Tamiyo Kusakari) (2021) and various works choreographed by Tomohiko Tsujimoto and Koharu Sugawara.

**Risa Makino** (dancer) is a versatile dancer not bound by specific genre, skilled in a variety of dance techniques including contemporary, jazz, pop, house, hip-hop and more. Her dancing style makes the most of her distinctive body, with her "slender eyes, long neck, and monkey arms." She is active in a wide range of art fields, including dance performances, plays, musicals, live music performances and music videos.

**Miyu Motegi** (dancer) started training for classical ballet at the age of six and moved to Germany after graduating from high school. There, she studied classical ballet and contemporary dance at a ballet school and joined the Budapest Dance Theater after obtaining a diploma. She moved back to Japan in 2018, starting a professional dance career based in Tokyo. She sees inspiration within the smallest unit of dance and creates works while trying to find and express movements in the sensations that trigger between body and mind. She is interested in the body that can only be found in dance.

**Miki Sasaki** (dancer) started training in classical ballet with Chikako Konma at the age of six, and started contemporary dance training under Shintaro Hirahara at the age of 20 while she was attending Aoyama Gakuin Women's Junior College. Sasaki completed the first semester of the master's program at Ochanomizu University Graduate School. From 2019 to 2023, she was a member of Kaori Seki's Co. PUNCTUMUN. In addition to her work with Seki's dance company, Sasaki also appeared in works by Masahiro Yanagimoto and Honoh Horikawa. In 2022, she started creating her own dance pieces and has presented her work in various locations in Japan.

**Mariko Shibata** (dancer) started dancing when she joined the dance club in high school. She received the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Award at the All Japan High School and University Dance Festival twice. She began training under Kazuyuki Futami at the age of 19. After graduating from Bunka Fashion College, she joined the costume department of Shiki Theater Company, overseeing costumes for *CATS*, *The Little Mermaid* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* before leaving the company in 2019. She has appeared in dance works choreographed by Ruri Mito, Kazuyuki Futami and Shiragami Momoko, as well as video works choreographed by Mikuni Yanaihara, Mayumu Minakawa and Daisuke Omiya.

**Maho Takahashi** (dancer) started training in classical ballet at the age of three, and contemporary dance and hip hop at the age of 10 at the Iwafune Dance Theater. After graduating from high school, she moved to Tokyo and performed in various productions with the Japan Ballet Association and Shakespeare Theatre. In 2012, she traveled to the UK on her own to deepen her practices in contemporary dance, physical theater,

and classical ballet. In 2013, she studied abroad for one year at the Zurich Opera Ballet School in Switzerland. In 2015, she became a member of Organworks, a contemporary dance company led by Shintaro Hirahara, and has participated in numerous performances both in Japan and abroad. Currently, in addition to being active as a dancer, she is also an instructor and director at RETREAT STUDIO myak in Tochigi.

## **Yoko Shioya 20/20: Celebrating 20 Years of Artistic Vision**

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Place your bid in this one-of-a-kind opportunity to own Hiroshi Sugimoto's signature black and white photography work, while joining in celebrating Japan Society Artistic Director Yoko Shioya's 20th anniversary. In honoring Yoko's milestone, her long-time friend and collaborator, Hiroshi Sugimoto, one of the most revered contemporary Japanese artists of his time, has donated his work to be auctioned off in support of Yoko Shioya and Japan Society's Performing Arts program. The proceeds of the auction will go directly to the Yoko Shioya 20/20 campaign.

**See the work and learn more here:**



## **Yoko Shioya 20/20 Supporters** as of 12/31/2024

A heartfelt thank you to those who have already contributed in honor of Yoko Shioya's 20th anniversary and to ensure the continued success of the Performing Arts Program!

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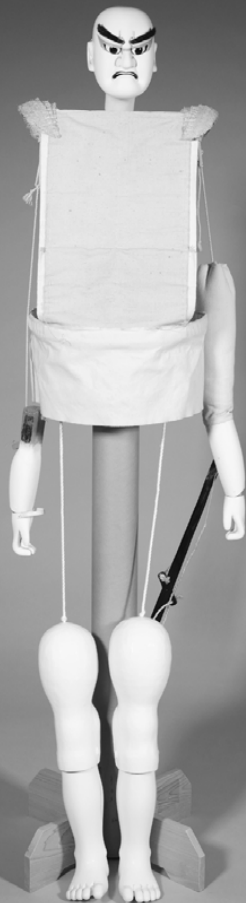
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JAPAN SOCIETY GALLERY EXHIBITION

# BUNRAKU BACKSTAGE

OCTOBER 4, 2024 — JANUARY 19, 2025

Alongside the live bunraku performances held at Japan Society this fall, Bunraku Backstage offers a rare glimpse behind the scenes of the theater. Showcasing actual working puppets, props, instruments, and costumes on loan from the National Bunraku Theatre, Osaka, this exhibition unveils the collaboration that goes into staging a bunraku production. Unexpected bunraku-inspired multimedia works by contemporary artists explore bunraku's ongoing inspiration and influence.



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*Performed in Japanese with English supertitles.*



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- **Friday, January 17 at 7:30 pm**
- **Saturday, January 18 at 7:30 pm**

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*Duke Bluebeard's Castle* © Yoji Ishizawa.

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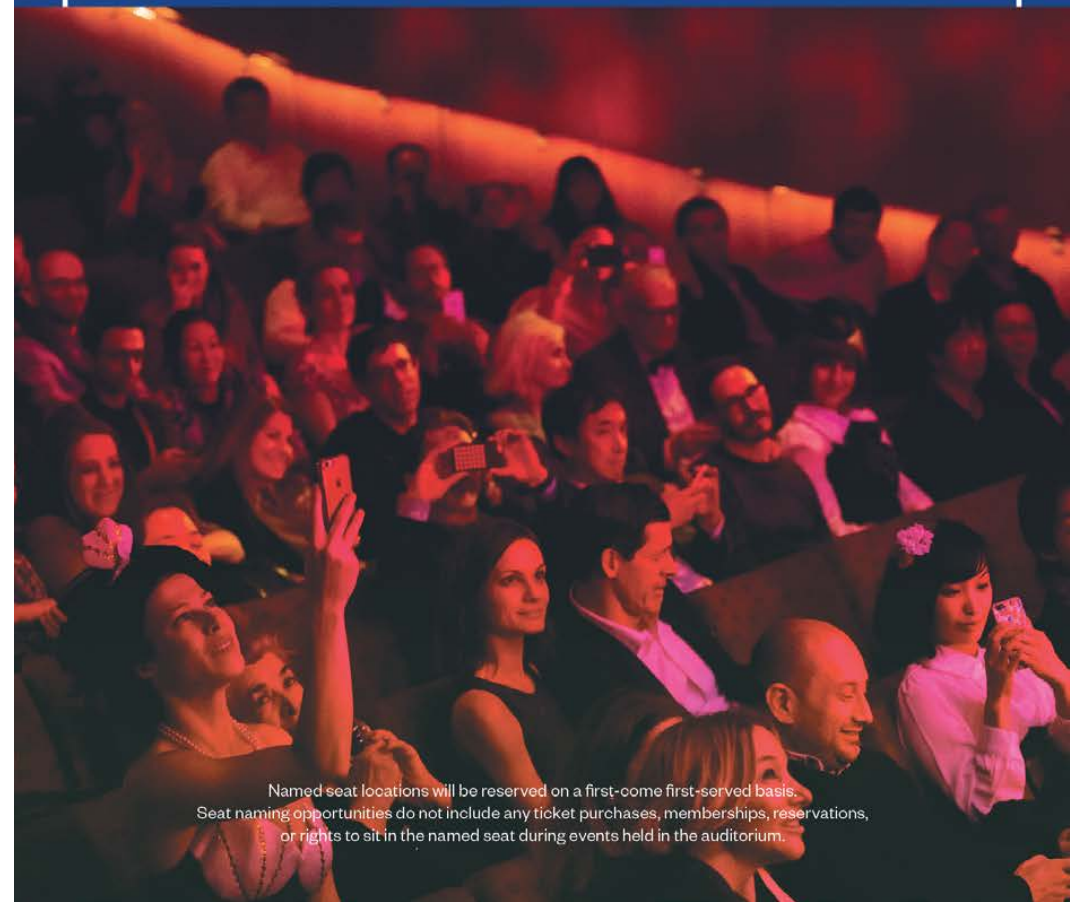
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